

the chronicle

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a preview of what
the future will hold**

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serves up winning
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of success proves a
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Businesses champion the region

BUSINESS leaders behind the Black Country's plan to create a Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) have met key Government officials.

While the Black Country's bid was not initially approved, work is continuing on refining the proposal, which would see councils and businesses work together to share ideas.

The creation of the business-led Black Country LEP is supported by Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton Councils, more than 11 strategic businesses and the skills, education and transport sectors.

Stewart Towe, from Hadley Industries PLC, who will chair the shadow Black Country LEP, said: "Last week's announcement may not have included approval for the Black Country LEP but we are all confident that this is just around the corner."

Charity gift is bloomin' great

A FLOWER club said it with money when they handed over more than £2,300 to a war charity recently.

Halesowen Flower Club raised £2,370 for Help for Heroes during the past 12 months through a series of activities, including plant, book and card sales.

Major Ian Baldry, a long-serving member of the Territorial Army who helps coordinate fundraising for the national charity, visited the club to pick up the cheque.

Union card to help avoid debt

A CREDIT union in Dudley is offering a new service to residents wanting to save for the festive period.

Castle and Crystal Credit Union in Dudley has set up a new scheme which allows members an Alto Mastercard which can be pre-loaded with cash. The Dudley Council-backed service says the card can then be used to purchase goods up to the value on the card to avoid debt.

Park fence finished

A £55,000 project to erect a steel fence at parts of a Wordsley Park has been completed. Work started at King George V Park after a 10ft section of the brick boundary wall collapsed. Fencing has been installed in its place after Dudley Council chiefs said it could have cost £100,000 to rebuild the wall.

Workers in the pink after £2,400 fundraiser



In the pink for charity – staff at Perry Hinges, Cradley Heath, with the £2,480 cheque they raised for the Breast Cancer Campaign

STAFF from a family-run Black Country company were tickled pink when they raised more than £2,000 for charity.

A Perry Hinges, based on Doulton Road, Cradley Heath, held their own Wear it Pink day in aid of the Breast Cancer Campaign.

The company's initial target was £2,000 but they eventually reached £2,480 thanks to a series of fundraising activities.

As well as donations for wearing pink clothes, they organised a monster raffle with donations ranging from days out at the West Midlands Safari Park and Worcester racecourse, meals and tickets for the theatre and £100.

Operations director Guy Perry said: "We have been supporting this special day for several years and our aim is always to beat the previous year's total."

"Many of our customers have supported us in this venture as well as our staff who certainly entered into the spirit."

"Some of the costumes they were were quite unique and hilarious."

Grottos and fun to greet festive season

THE first details of Dudley's £20,000 Christmas celebrations can be revealed – with grottos, reindeer, a craft market and celebrity guests all on the agenda.

The festivities will be kicking off later this month in Halesowen, Brierley Hill, Dudley and Stourbridge.

Dudley Council said it wanted people to turn out in force to enjoy the celebrations and give local traders a seasonal boost.

Dudley Council deputy leader Les Jones said: "We would encourage as many people as possible to get into the festive spirit and support these events."

Halesowen will host the first of the big switch-ons on November 20.

Dancing

Entertainment is planned throughout the day from 10am until 5pm including funfair rides, street entertainment, a radio roadshow and free facepainting and balloon modelling.

Father Christmas will also be in attendance.

The fun then moves to Brierley Hill town centre on November 26.

Families will be able to visit Santa and his reindeer in his grotto between 4-6pm.

There will also be dancing and live music and Bob The Builder will be on hand to meet the crowds.

The following day in Dudley town centre, Santa will once again be meeting youngsters in his grotto between midday and 5pm.

There will also be the opportunity to enjoy funfair rides and free face painting.

HEADSTONE IS REPLACED

A WIDOW has thanked a generous Black Country firm which stepped in after thieves stole her husband's marble gravestone from a Halesowen churchyard.

Grandmother Patricia Rhead, aged 73, said she was devastated after finding late husband Ronald's gravestone had been taken from the grounds at St John The Baptist Church, Queensway.

But after stonemason Simon Foster heard of Mrs Rhead's plight, he created a replacement for free, which has now been restored at his resting place.

Father-of-four Mr Foster, aged 44, who runs family firm Quality Memorials, in Powke Lane, Cradley Heath, said: "It was a wicked shame what happened and I just could not believe it when I heard about it."

Wonderful

"She is such a nice lady and I hope we'll be pals for life now," he added.

Mrs Rhead, of Stourbridge, said: "It has been a wonderful gesture

and I can't thank him enough. It is really heart-warming for someone to have done this."

Mr Rhead died aged 73 from liver cancer last April – a month before the couple were due to celebrate their golden wedding anniversary.

Mrs Rhead discovered her husband's resting place had been desecrated when she visited his grave on September 22.

She had paid £500 for the original 2ft tall white marble stone memorial.

Anyone with information about the theft is asked to call Halesowen police station on 0345 113 5000 or speak to Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Right: Grave-stone maker Simon Foster with widow Patricia Rhead, aged 73, and the new stone he crafted after thieves stole the original memorial from the churchyard of St John The Baptist Church, in Halesowen's Queensway



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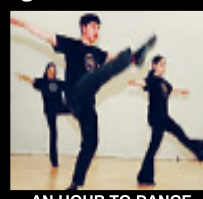


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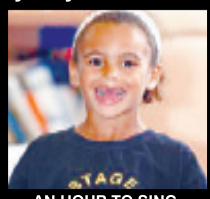
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Break-ins targeting boilers in homes

AT LEAST 10 copper boilers have been stolen from homes, say Dudley police, with properties under renovation being targeted.

Houses are being left to flood after pipes are ripped out, said Det Sgt Mark Rushton, of the burglary team.

"It's still a huge problem, both locally and nationally, but we are doing a lot to target it."

"People are breaking into properties that are being renovated, stealing the copper boilers and piping, and leaving the places flooded."

He said there had been 10 such cases in the last two months in Dudley, with thieves able to make up to £60 from scrap dealers.

Industrial

Det Sgt Rushton urged householders who may think empty homes are safe from burglars to ensure lights are left on and curtains put up.

"We're really hammering the scrap yards who are taking stolen property," he added.

Earlier this month, £20,000-worth of aluminium castings and £10,000 worth of stolen beer kegs were recovered from an industrial unit in Gornal.

And last week hundreds of vans and trucks carrying metal were pulled over in the hunt for stolen scrap. The crimewave has been fuelled by soaring metal prices, which have been triggered by construction booms in the Middle East.

Thefts have also caused chaos on the railways.

Officers given powers to move on lout gangs

COMPLAINTS about yobs hanging around shops and alleyways in Halesowen have led to police seeking and obtaining powers to move them on.

Residents of Shenstone Avenue, Manor Lane, Kent Road, Leasowes Lane and Western Avenue had protested to police.

The streets are near shops and alleyways which officers say are haunts for gangs of youths who loiter and cause a nuisance. Concerns were raised by residents at police meetings and as a result, officers have applied for a dispersal order giving them the power to break up unruly gangs.

The order, which will be in force for six months, comes just days after an extension of a booze ban in public parks and streets in Stourbridge was given the go-ahead by Dudley licensing chiefs.

The scheme will extend an existing order, if confirmed by the full council, and means parts of Wollaston, the South Road playing fields, and the Old Quarter including Greenfields Park, will be included.

Streets and public areas around Mary Stevens Park, Stourbridge town centre ring road and Hagley Road to Oldswinford Cross have already been designated.

Pc Matt Barnsley, who applied to Dudley Council to secure the new dispersal order for Halesowen, said officers wanted to take positive action to help improve the quality of life for people living in the streets affected.

"The order will help us tackle anti-social behaviour problems head-on."

"Contrary to public perception, reports of anti-social behaviour actually decrease at this time of year."

"We know residents in this affected area will be delighted to hear something is being done."

Returning

Pc Barnsley said Shenstone Avenue was situated between a row of shops and a park and golf course, which appealed to young people wanting to "hang out", but this often led to them behaving anti-socially.

"Shenstone Avenue and Western Avenue are separated by an alleyway that also leads to the park. This is a constant anti-social behaviour hotspot," he said.

The order will allow police to break up groups of youths and prevent them from returning within 24 hours.

Crime worries on mentally ill

THOUSANDS of criminals with mental health problems in Dudley and Walsall are not getting the help they need, a Black Country MP has warned ministers.

Stourbridge Tory Margot James said that almost 2,000 people with severe mental health problems in the areas are on probation or in jail, but only 40 are in contact with mental health services.

Police set up market chats

A MARKET stall for police officers to chat to people about issues affecting them has been launched in Sedgley.

The Police Stall has been set up at the Concorde Market, Dudley Street, to encourage the public to chat to officers.

Sgt Tony Osbourne, of Sedgley neighbourhood policing team, said the stall was one of several tactics being used to get in touch with people, along side Twitter and the

Sedgley Beat blog. "When we started the blog I said that it was just another means of us speaking with, and listening to, our community here in Sedgley - but we recognise that not everyone wants to access that sort of thing online," he said.

"The market stall is another means for community members to get information on local policing and safety."

The stall will not be staffed all the time.

Mairead's artwork is voted tops



Mairead Flannery's artwork Human Diversity is to hang in the office of Education Secretary Michael Gove

SCHOOLGIRL artist Mairead Flannery has beaten off competition from more than 1,000 other youngsters to bring a national prize home to Stourbridge.

The 2010 Arts & Minds competition, organised by teachers' union NASUWT, aims to celebrate cultural diversity through artwork and creative writing.

Mairead, aged 14, a pupil at Redhill School and Specialist Language College, in Junction Road, created a piece she called 'Human Diversity', depicting a boy and a woman separated by darkness.

Minister

She was chosen as winner in the secondary school category, and the judges were so impressed that they went on to name her as overall winner from all 12 sections.

The painting will now go on display in the Westminster office of Michael Gove, the Secretary of State for Education, who said it was "totally professional in quality".

"This is a striking image and very impressive. It is an amazing piece of art," the minister added.

"It is beautiful and thought-provoking and goes to the heart of what Arts & Minds is about."

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Future shape of care for elderly



Above: An artist's impression of how the new development in Russells Hall will look
Left: An image of the £8 million retirement village which is planned for Coseley

THESE new images show multi-million pound retirement villages which herald the future of care for older people in the borough.

The development in Coseley will have facilities such as hair and beauty salon, gyms and a library.

Work is also under way on a Russells Hall complex and both are due to be finished by summer next year.

The Coseley scheme, in Whitehouse Street, is a £8 million project and will be made up of 72

apartments while a £16million scheme in Middlepark Road, Russells Hall, will boast 132 apartments and will provide a range of care for the over 55s.

Both will be run by registered social landlord Midland Heart and are the first of five similar schemes planned for Dudley. Residents will be able to choose whether to rent, buy or part-buy their new property.

Security

Dudley Council housing chief Councillor David Simms said: "They are basically like a mini

community. It is independent living but with the security that there is help on hand."

He said that he knew "a lot" of people have already signed up to be kept informed about the developments as they progress which may bode well for the numbers interested in moving in.

Among those with the opportunity to move in are the 29 residents at Ambleside House, King William Street, near Stourbridge, which is earmarked for closure. It is said that the care home will need £1million spent on it to bring it up to scratch.

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Crossing campaign on 'death trap' road

CAMPAIGNERS are calling for a pelican crossing on a "death trap" dual carriageway at Halesowen.

The A456 Kidderminster to Birmingham road at Hayley Green was dubbed the second most dangerous road in Britain in a TV documentary.

Pedestrians are often forced to "take their lives in their hands", says Councillor Ken Turner, who is aiming to collect 3,000 signatures on a petition.

Councillor Turner said parents and children struggle to cross the road to reach Lutley Primary School, and there have been a number of near misses.

A 91-year-old man was hit by a car and suffered a broken arm, he added.

Councillor Turner said: "If we don't do something about this road then lives will be at risk."

At least 3,000 names are needed for a debate at a full Dudley Council meeting. Copies of the petition are available from clt.kenneth.turner@dudley.gov.uk or 0121 501 3930.

Society's award

DUDLEY Building Society is celebrating after being "highly commended" at a national awards ceremony.

It was given the accolade in the Best Local Building Society category in the What Mortgage Awards. The awards were voted for by the public.

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Groups' chance to get help with securing grants

VOLUNTEERS and community groups from across Dudley are being offered help to snap up cash at an information fair.

Running from 2.15pm to 8.30pm on November 16 at the Sycamore Green Adventure Centre, on the Old Park Farm Estate, it will offer advice and support to community groups who are seeking external funding for events, activities and site improvements in parks and green spaces.

There will be a drop-in format with information available from potential funders and organisations throughout the day as well as presentations at 3pm and 7pm.

The event follows successful grant applications from groups who have applied in partnership with the council. Examples include the Friends and Residents of Buffery Park who have recently received a Grassroots Grant for a bike event.

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Car builder expands to create 24 new jobs

Recipe to produce star chefs

A Michelin star chef took time out from his busy restaurants to take a look at two new £400,000 kitchens at a Black Country college.

Andreas Antona, head chef at Simpsons in Highfield Road, Edgbaston, chatted to students at Halesowen College and passed on advice. Students were keen to show off the new kitchens, which have been recently unveiled.

Mr Antona held a question and answer session and told students how he worked his way up to the top of his profession.

He said the kitchens were "fantastic". He added: "If you don't get the right start in your career then you don't stand a chance."

Headteacher Keith Bates said the college was hoping to produce a new breed of Michelin star chefs.

Student Beckie Musgrove, aged 18, said: "We feel privileged that he has come to see us. He told us about his restaurant in Birmingham and that he chose the name because of his dad."



Michelin Star chef Andreas Antona with Level II professional diploma students Rhianon Hutton, aged 16, Jamie Dean, aged 17, and fellow catering students

A BLACK Country sports car maker today unveiled details of a multi-million pound global expansion plan, creating around 24 new jobs for local people.

Bosses at Dudley-based Westfield Sportscars Ltd have confirmed a deal had been signed with a Malaysian manufacturing company and will start exporting products to the country within the next few months.

A similar deal with companies in India is now on the table, with exports beginning before the end of next year.

Shell

Managing director Julian Turner, aged 33, from Kingswinford, said the two new projects would almost double the workforce at the factory, which currently employs 30 people at its base in the Gibbons Industrial Park in Dudley Road, Kingswinford.

He said the new projects would be joint development programmes with Malaysian company DRB-Hicom and an Indian company.

Mr Turner said: "We have cars such as the Lotus 7 which are open-topped, so aren't great for a Malaysian market. "Our plan is to export the shell that they can then assemble into a model more suitable to sell there."

Walk to Junction appeal

COMMUTERS travelling to and from Stourbridge Junction train station are being encouraged to walk or cycle rather than drive. As part of the £4.5million Dudley Healthy Towns scheme, the pedestrian route from the station to Mary Stevens Park has been significantly improved.

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An Unfurnished detached house within a cul-de-sac location, briefly comprising of: Gas Central Heating, Two Reception Rooms, Fitted Kitchen, Three Bedrooms, Bathroom with Shower, Rear Garden, Driveway Parking

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£475 PCM

thechronicle

COMPETITION

Show time so get set to party

CLOTHES Show Live 2010 is back to host the hottest and most stylish fashion and beauty event of the year!

The show returns to Birmingham's NEC, from December 3-8 bringing together hundreds of your favourite fashion and beauty brands and boutiques; non-stop catwalk shows and the UK's hottest celebrities.

It's the ultimate shopping destination this party season. And what's more, you could be going for free. Clothes Show Live is teaming up with the Chronicles to give 10 readers the chance to win a pair of tickets.

Inspirational

Whether you're looking for the ideal girls' day out, inspiration for the Christmas party season or a chance to see the impressive dance and catwalk shows, Clothes Show Live has it all.

This year's 45-minute Fashion Theatre performance with 40 models and dancers will set the party season off in true style - packed with 250 fabulous outfits and

inspirational hair and make-up looks. There is no other show quite like it.

New to this year's show is the 'Sknitich' zone, where you can watch presentations and demonstrations, learn new techniques, browse through beautiful fabrics and gain insight into everything related to sewing, knitting, needlework, stitching and embroidery.

Customisation is back and Sknitich is the place for every lady to tailor her individual fashion needs!

Running alongside Clothes Show Live is the exciting new dance experience - The Dance Show. Pick up advice, take part in classes and get your groove on at what is set to be the most spectacular dance event of the year.

From Friday (3) - Sunday (5) only, makeover wizard Gok Wan will be presenting in



YOUR CHANCE TO WIN

To stand a chance of winning win a pair of tickets simply answer this question.

What is the name of the makeover wizard?

Send your answers to Clothes Show Competition, Chronicle series (editorial), 51-53 Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES. Closing date: Thursday, November 18. Usual rules apply. Editor's decision is final.

For more show details go to clotheshowlive.com Tickets are available online at clotheshowlive.com or call 0844 581 1256.

Clothes Show Live's Fashion Theatre before 40 hot male and female models take to the stage for a high octane catwalk showcase.

Performing in the Fashion Theatre across the six days will be the UK's hottest new boy band Injustice.

Ready to take the charts by storm, Injustice will perform to an 180,000 strong audience before the catwalk extravaganza begins.

Combining fashion, dance and music, the Fashion Theatre will come alive as the lads perform a single from their ambitious debut album, World's Most Wanted.

thechronicle

Ban on booze to beat the yobs wins backing

Frankenstein writer a spellbinder



Author Jed Mercurio gives a talk at Cradley Heath Library

A RENOWNED author and screenwriter enchanted audiences with two fascinating library talks at Cradley Heath.

Jed Mercurio, from Cannock, visited Cradley Heath and Stone Cross libraries to tell of his successful TV writing career. His screen credits include The Grimleys, Cardiac Arrest, Invasion Earth and Frankenstein. Bodies, a book written by Mercurio, was also made into a Bafta-nominated BBC series.

During his talks the writer revealed how he drew on his own experiences at school, in the RAF and working as a junior hospital

doctor in Birmingham to help create his work.

The supervisor at Cradley Heath Library, Jonathan Floyd, said: "Jed was excellent and very down to earth."

Postponed

"He was due to shoot a new television series which was supposed to be starting on the day he gave the talks, but he postponed them for us so we felt quite privileged."

Councillor Ann Shackleton, Sandwell cabinet member for youth, culture and leisure, said: "We're delighted that such a successful writer as Jed Mercurio gave up his time to come and talk about his experiences."

AN ALCOHOL ban in public parks and streets in Stourbridge has been given the go-ahead by licensing chiefs.

Drink-fuelled youths have been gathering in the town, prompting West Midlands Police to ask for a drinks ban.

Members of Dudley Council's licensing committee decided to back the proposal following a meeting.

The proposals will have to be ratified by the council's cabinet before it comes into force.

The scheme proposed by police and would extend an existing order.

Streets and public areas around Mary Stevens Park, Stourbridge town centre ring road and Hagley Road to Oldswinford Cross are already including an existing alcohol-free zone.

Successful

The extension would take in parts of Wollaston, with the South Road playing fields, and the Old Quarter, including Greenfields Park.

The ban will also extend to Stourbridge's new bus station in Foster Street East.

It gives West Midlands Police officers power to confiscate alcohol from anyone drinking in the exclusion zone.

Committee member Councillor David Vickers said: "These orders do work and they have been successful in stopping drinking in the streets in our town centres."

Late-night vandalism to cars within Wollaston and the Old Quarter have also been reported by residents, according to police.

Retirement led to suicide of engineer

A FORMER Dudley Council civil engineer committed suicide after his life "lost direction" when he retired, an inquest heard.

John Garner, aged 65, of Chawn Hill, Oldswinford, was found hanged at his home. The coroner recorded a verdict he killed himself.

working two weeks before his first hospital visit on February 5. He was suffering from blackouts and breathlessness, said his wife, Eira-Lynn.

He stayed in hospital for 10 days and was discharged.

The appointment with senior cardiac physiologist Stephanie Tether on March 2 revealed "no deterioration" in his condition, Mrs Worton said.

Black Country Coroner Robin Balmain recorded a verdict of natural causes.

A SEDGLEY grandmother has been chosen as the new face of the World Cancer Research Fund after beating the odds to survive the disease.

Maureen Sommerville, aged 65, was diagnosed with a rare form of breast cancer in 1998 and doctors told her she only had a 30 per cent chance of living beyond five years.

"I thought 'I'm going to be in that 30 per cent'," she said.

Treatment

"I decided to become more proactive about my health and diet after the sledgehammer treatment of surgery, radiotherapy, chemotherapy and drugs, and the fund's advice and information helped me greatly."

Mrs Sommerville, of High Park Crescent, said one message she wants to get across is that a healthy diet and exercise can help prevent some cancers.

"I'm delighted to be promoting this message to other people so they can help prevent cancer and avoid going through misery."

"I've got children and grandchildren. I want them to live a healthy life and so I believe it's important to help the fund so they can get the message of healthy eating and healthy living out to the public."

Since defeating cancer, the former primary school teacher has become a regular volunteer for Cancer Support Dudley, eventually becoming a trustee, and now writes monthly articles on nutrition for their magazine.

Sommerville also taken up a number of sports such as gliding, climbing, yoga and working out at the gym – as well as learning to play the piano and how to practise reiki healing.

World Cancer Research Fund's Natalie Turant said: "Maureen epitomises our outlook and philosophy, and we are delighted that she's helping us spread the message."

"As a cancer survivor herself and a volunteer at her local support group, she is all too well aware of the devastation cancer can cause to lives and families."

"It is people like her who really make a difference."

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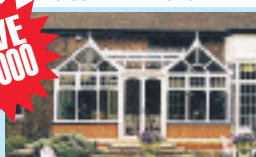
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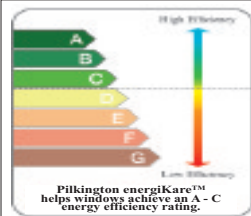
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Help for patients is moving closer

Gwen's gang of helpers buy monitors for wards

KINGSWINFORD pensioner Gwen Timmins and her small band of helpers have ordered two new blood pressure monitors for Corbett Hospital.

They have raised £50,000 in seven years to make life more comfortable for hospital patients around the Dudley borough.

Gwen, of Veronica Road, who received the MBE in 2007 for her fundraising efforts, said she wanted to thank visitors to Russells Hall Hospital for buying tombola tickets from the stand she and other volunteers from the Support Group for Pain Relief run in the entrance hall.

"We have just ordered two blood pressure monitors for the day case unit at Corbett Hospital, Stourbridge, costing £2,000," said Gwen. "And that's the proceeds of about two months, which shows how popular our stall is."

Gwen and Tony Smith, from Hale-



sowen, now run the stall between them.

Until recently they also had help from Patricia Morgan and Jan Storey, who have decided to call it a day and retire from fundraising.

At Corbett Hospital, Stourbridge are back, staff nurse Palminder Mander, staff nurse Helen Bruton, team leader Jennifer Wynn, with members of the Support Group for Pain Relief Unit, Gwen Timmins, seated, and chairman Tony Smith

THREE one-stop shops for people with dementia in Dudley borough have moved a step closer.

Dudley Council has approved a report to develop the Dudley dementia strategy.

The one stop shops will be in the north, south and central parts of the borough and will be for people with dementia and their carers.

They will provide support from a range of professionals recruited from the health, social care and voluntary sector.

The strategy, which is being written jointly by the council, NHS Dudley, and the Dudley and Walsall Mental Health Trusts, will complement the national strategy published in February 2009.

It is estimated that there are more than 3,800 people in Dudley who have dementia, and the figure is set to rise.

Councillor Lesley Faulkner, cabinet member for adult and community services, said: "This is no doubt a debilitating condition and we need to work together with our partners in health and with voluntary groups to ensure we provide the support that is needed."

The centres will include carer support services, specialist dementia care staff and day respite for carers, as well as day opportunities for people with dementia. It is planned that the dementia gateways will be fully operational by spring.

Sounds like history

THE history of Dudley borough will be explored during a series of talks next week. Halesowen Library will host an event on Wednesday, November 17 when Mick Dickens will talk about the sounds of history in the 1940s. The talk, beginning at 2.30pm, is in the Shenstone Theatre.

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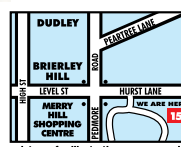
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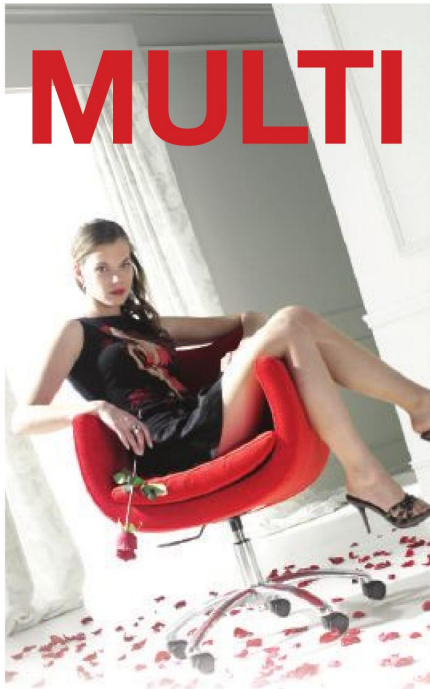
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GAMES

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DJ HERO 2 (12, ACTIVISION)

DJ Hero was a breakthrough rhythm game for 2009, allowing all those wanna-be DJs to hit the decks whilst essentially following the mechanics of other instrument-based rhythm games, like Guitar Hero or Rock Band.

A turntable controller with a spinning platter and three colour-coded buttons is your main method of mimicking the scratches and sound effects in each mix and a crossfader and effects dial are used in more advanced techniques.

The big improvement for 2010 is the inclusion of freestyle sampling, crossfading and scratching during segments of the mix, which has greatly increased the playability and fun factor. Plus the ability to import your own Xbox Live avatar, which really help make it feel like you own those mixes.

The DJ battle system, either via online multiplayer or through two turntable controllers, has been tweaked and expanded too.

Add to that a soundtrack at your fingertips which is clubbers' heaven (from Grandmaster Flash to Lady Gaga via Basement Jaxx and The Prodigy) and the pick of the world's best clubs for your virtual surroundings, and you can have great fun kidding yourself that you're a superstar DJ.

DJ Hero 2 was reviewed on X360 but is also available for Wii and PS3



All this scratching will be making you itch - taking your turn on the turntable in DJ Hero 2, which is even more fun than last year's original

**PSP EXCLUSIVE:
GOD OF WAR: GHOST OF SPARTA
(18, SONY)**

THE follow up to Chains of Olympus offers another epic storyline steeped in Greek mythology and featuring thrilling, brutal battles with the ancient world's fiercest and most fantastic creatures.

Spartan warrior Kratos has become the new God of War but before he can take his place among the immortals on Mount Olympus he first has to go on a quest to discover the source of the nightmares that plague him - a journey into his own dark past.

Anyone who is already a fan of the God of War franchise knows what to expect - frenetic, intense action and gob-smacking graphics, alongside some puzzle-solving to keep the grey cells active. They won't be disappointed by bigger bosses, loads more enemies, new weapons and combat moves, and probably the best graphics yet seen on the PSP.

It's an action-packed Greek myths epic in the palm of your hand... what's not to like!

**ALIEN BREED 2: ASSAULT
(16, TEAM 17)**

AVAILABLE on Xbox Live Arcade for 800 Microsoft Points, this is a so-so sci-fi shooter. You are on board an alien spaceship, trying to power up this and shut off that whilst being menaced by bug-like monsters which, of course, you despatch with an awesome display of firepower.

Made by the same company behind the ever-popular Worms franchise, AB2 has lots of detail but I found the 'from above' viewpoint irritating and the gameplay - simple task, kill aliens, simple task, kill aliens - rapidly became tedious. OK, if you like running around corridors zapping nasties.

REVIEWS BY LEON BURAKOWSKI

**DIVINITY II: THE DRAGON KNIGHT SAGA
(12, FOCUS)**

THE original Ego Draconis, in revamped form, plus new adventure Flames of Vengeance make this a pretty hefty role playing fantasy package for those looking for an alternative to Fable III.

On the plus side, Rivellon is a well-realised world with its population of monsters, wizards and warriors. The quests are deep and will keep dedicated gamers occupied for hours. On the minus, the graphics disappoint, the animation sometimes having a blurry PS2 look and there are frequent delays between scenes.

Reviewed on X360, also available for PC.

**WRC FIA WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP
(12, BLACK BEAN)**

NO frills, no flash and certainly not as fun as Dirt 2, however, there is something rather compelling about this vanilla-only rally sim. Perhaps it's to do with the roar of the engine or the urgent instructions of your navigator.

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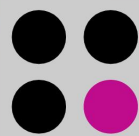
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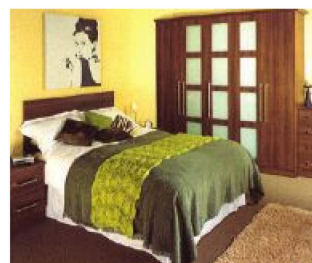


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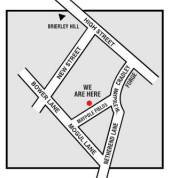
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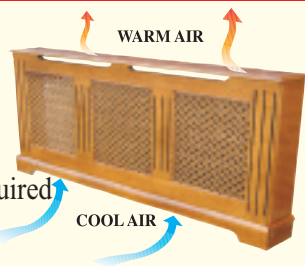
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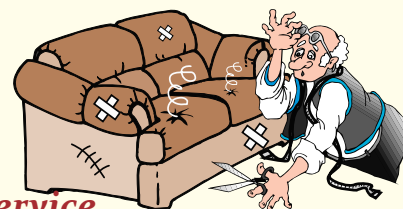
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Ridgefield Road, Halesowen



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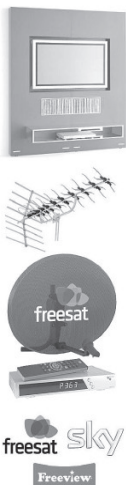
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the chronicle

Patrols step up around fire-hit school



Fire damage caused to the canopy and wrecked a shed at Amblecote Primary School

POLICE patrols have been stepped up around a Dudley school following an arson attack which caused damage amounting to £7,000, it has emerged.

The attack at Amblecote Primary School, Stourbridge, has been condemned as "dreadful" by headteacher Ann Mason.

The blaze destroyed playground equipment and tore through storage sheds at neighbouring allotments.

Flames damaged a canopy over a playground, burnt through drainpipes leading

off the school building and wrecked a play shed in the school's grounds, in School Drive.

A blaze was also started at nearby Amblecote Allotment Gardens where two sheds were gutted by the fire on the same night late on October 25.

Visibility

Police say they are investigating the two attacks and Dudley Council says it is making repairs to fencing around the allot-

ments to stop youths gaining access again.

Sgt Steve Gordon, of Stourbridge police station, said high-visibility patrols had been increased around the school in the evenings.

Mrs Mason said: "In some ways we were lucky that the fire crews had been at the allotments and seen the fire over at the school at the same time otherwise it could have got inside the school itself."

Two computer hard drives were stolen by thieves in a separate raid on Sunday.

Smoker death rate is Black Country lowest

Lottery boost for women's group

PROJECTS in the Dudley area will be given a welcome boost, as the Big Lottery Fund announced more than £500,000 of cash injections in the region.

They are among 68 projects across the region providing services - from helping children who are about to undergo surgery to organising activities and recreation for disabled people.

The Humaraa Project, based at the Lye Community Project, has been handed £10,000 to develop its services to help women. The group helps by getting women access to support services and educational facilities.

Other groups in the Dudley area which have also received cash through the scheme include Bobbington Village Hall, in South Staffordshire, which has received £7,220.

The church council at St John's Church, in Swindon, near Wombourne, received £600.



Humaraa Project members from back left, reiki tutor Rubina Janjua, admin trainee Haleema Javid, volunteer Farida Tabassum, creche assistant Raheela Naz, team leader Nazia Shehzad and project manager Maimoona Ramzan

DEATH RATES from smoking are lower in Dudley than in other Black Country boroughs and in England as a whole.

A study by the Association of Public Health Observatories found that Dudley's rate was 203 deaths per 100,000 people, compared with neighbouring Sandwell's 280.

Across the West Midlands as a whole, there was a greater proportion of smoking-related deaths between 2006 and 2008 compared to the average rate of 206 for the whole of England.

The West Midlands also had a higher rate of smoking-related deaths from heart disease, stroke and chronic lung disease than the rest of the country. Only deaths from lung cancer remained similar to the average.

Admissions

Wolverhampton had an average of 239 smoking-related deaths per 100,000 of population and Walsall's figure was 248.

South Staffordshire fared better with 189. Shropshire, Worcestershire and Solihull were also below the England average, but Birmingham and Coventry fared badly.

A spokesman for the West Midlands Public Health Observatory said: "The number of deaths attributable to smoking within the West Midlands does not come as too much of a surprise."

The study also revealed the proportion of hospital admissions due to smoking was significantly worse than average in the West Midlands.

Pensioners gather for tips on safety and good health

A SAFETY event aimed at older people in Dudley attracted more than 100 people.

The free Keep Well, Keep Safe event is held three times a year. It aims to educate and raise older people's awareness about safe and healthy lifestyles.

The recent event held at Redhill School, Stourbridge, consisted of workshops, discussions and presentations, as well as a comedy show performed by the Fizzog Theatre group.

Try honour for rugby legend Cliff says fan

A CAMPAIGN has been launched to honour a Black Country rugby legend after he visited his home town.

Cliff Watson, aged 80, of Dudley, who played for rugby league side St Helens, captained Great Britain and moved to Australia. He was voted one of his club's top 17 players in its 120-year history, but fans say he has been "forgotten" in Dudley.

They think that his achievements should be recognised. A Facebook group is being set up and it is hoped hundreds will join. It has been launched by Deb Brownlee, chairman of the group

raising cash for the regeneration of St John's Church, Kates Hill, where Mr Watson married in 1960.

Mr Watson, who now lives near Sydney, visited the church last month.

Bombed

Now Mrs Brownlee is calling for him to "get the recognition he deserves".

She feels there should be a plaque or display in Dudley Museum & Art Gallery - or even a statue similar to that of Manchester United and England football legend Duncan Edwards right in the town centre.

She said: "Cliff has achieved so much that people aren't even aware of. Dudley has got a lot to be proud of but sometime we don't make the most of it."

Mr Watson grew up in a terraced house in Fisher Street, Dudley, after the family's house in London was bombed in the Second World War.

He became the youngest ever player at Dudley Kingswinford rugby union team at the age of 15, before moving to St Helens two years later, where he was a prop forward and was made captain. In 1970, his side won the Championship Trophy.

Theatre recruits wanted

THE Brierley Hill base of the National Youth Theatre is running a course next year, and recruitment has started.

The organisation aims to give young people the opportunity to take part in the arts, such as performing in the West End.

The group will be running a free course for young people aged 16 to 24 between January and July at the Black Country Living Museum in Tipton Road, Dudley.

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thechronicle

Store hosts church toy appeal

NEEDY children in Cradley Heath are being offered an extra present for Christmas thanks to a new initiative between three local organisations.

Cradley Heath Baptist Church has set up a Christmas Toy Appeal, which is being held in Tesco's Cradley Heath store on Foxoak Street.

Customers can buy a toy in store and then pop it in a basket, from which the gifts will be picked up and distributed by charity, Loaves 'n' Fishes.

The toys have been piling up already and will be circulated to needy children around the town right up until Christmas Eve.

Gordon Roberts, moderator for Cradley Heath Baptist and other local churches, organised the appeal.

He said: "We don't want to see any children without toys at Christmas - it's not their fault if they come from a troubled family."



Launching the Cradley Heath Baptist Church toy appeal are Sue Jakeman, from the Loaves 'n' Fishes Christian charity, Gordon Roberts, moderator for churches and Steve and Anna Heartland, also from the charity. They are joined by Tesco staff Bhupinder Panesar and duty manager Mark McCord

Georgian manor home bid backed

ENGLISH Heritage has thrown its weight behind plans to build new homes in the grounds of a listed Georgian manor house.

Developer Selbourne Homes has resubmitted proposals to build 14 houses in the shadow of Wordsley Manor, the home of the Firminstone family.

English Heritage was originally against the scheme but has changed its mind after it emerged that £400,000 from the development will be earmarked to help restore the manor house.

The organisation also says the design and layout of the proposed new houses has been revised to take into account its previous criticisms.

In a letter to the council English Heritage Historic Buildings Inspector Alan Taylor says: "English Heritage does not object to this resubmitted application which has satisfactorily addressed the concerns which we raised about design and financial justification in the previous application."

The letter also states that the building, which dates back to the mid 18th century is of particular historic significance for retaining its original interior decorative scheme and features.

More than 100 people have signed a petition against the previous application for the site.

Advertising feature

Transformations

Dora's story

DORA Longville has clocked up 1,700 miles - all because she wants tuck into her favourite lamb shank meal at a Wolverley restaurant.

And it's the first time in more than 20 years, 64-year-old Dora has been able to enjoy a painfree meal.

Her growing taste for all gastronomic delights is down to dentist Mr Buchell. Dora had endured decades of misery with ill-fitting false teeth.

Formerly of Brierley Hill, Dora retired to West Bay, Dorset. "It took five consultations to sort me out and every round trip was 240 miles, but it was worth every one of them."

"The Park Gate is our favourite place to eat when visiting the Black Country and I adore the lamb. My teeth look natural and I can eat anything now," she says.



Dora Longville is all smiles - I can eat anything on the menu now

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Dudley, is the person troubled denture wearers see when "they feel they have run out of options."

The 43-year-old, one of just a hundred or so registered UK denturists, is inviting those with problem false teeth to join a national "denture revolution".

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A former dental technician, he ran his own dental laboratory before training for his DD MCDP Cdt DipRCS(Eng) (Member of the college of dental prosthesis clinical dental technician Diplomat of the Royal college of Surgeons).

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the pulse



Check out the latest CDs
— page 28

And whatever next Miss Goldfrapp?

OVER 10 years and five albums the genre-mashing Goldfrapp, the duo featuring corkscrew-haired singer Alison Goldfrapp and bearded muso Will Gregory, have gone from the icy operatic mood music of Mercury Prize-nominated debut *Felt Mountain* to the joyous disco pop of this year's *Head First* album.

Coming to Birmingham's O2 Academy on Sunday (14) with their full band as part of a nine-date UK tour, fans will be looking for hints at the next genre to be revamped by Goldfrapp or the latest image to be adopted by the 44-year-old chameleon

songstress from Hampshire. In the past she has performed dressed as a futuristic air hostess, or in a flowing gown, or ABBA style jump suit, demonstrating a David Bowie-like flair for reinvention.

Her retro leaning blend of disco and glam rock, with hints of classic FM rock on the new album, has yielded a host of hit singles, including *Ooh La La*, Number One, *Ride A White Horse*, *Caravan Girl*, *Rocket and Alive*. Recently the duo have been working with A-list diva Christina Aguilera.

Fans will be going into the Birmingham venue eagerly anticipating what the glamorous and unpredictable Miss Goldfrapp will do next.

Model Momsen Taylor made to light up Wulfrun

RIISING American rock stars The Pretty Reckless, fronted by teenage movie actress and model Taylor Momsen, make their first visit to the Black Country for a gig at the Wulfrun Hall in Wolverhampton on Wednesday, December 15.

In 2000, the now 17-year-old, Momsen played little Cindy Lou Hoo opposite Jim Carrey as The Grinch and nearly pipped Miley Cyrus to become Disney's Hannah Montana. However, going to a White Stripes gig changed her musical taste and she now



cites Led Zeppelin, Nirvana and Oasis as her major musical influences, she certainly has a rawer rock voice than her Disney pop girl contemporaries.

She was recently in cult TV show *Gossip Girl* and Taylor was also the face of

fashion chain New Look for their spring/summer 2010 collection.

She and her New York based band got an enthusiastic welcome at the V Festival in August, the time their debut album *Light Me Up* was released.



Fans will be heading for Birmingham eagerly anticipating what the glamorous and unpredictable Miss Goldfrapp will do next

YOUR EIGHT-PAGE ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE AND WEEK'S TV-VIEWING



Cinema preview on page 28



Check out theatre line-up — page 23



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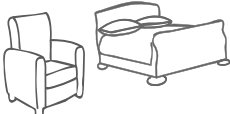
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with us who die,
we shall not
sleep, though
poppies grow in
Flanders fields*

Colonel John McCrae



The Saturdays launch Poppy Appeal 2010

28 October 2010

The Royal British Legion's 90th Poppy Appeal has been launched today, Thursday 28 October, highlighting its support for the injured, wounded and bereaved of the British Armed Forces serving in Afghanistan.

Under the motto, "Put on a poppy", the national Poppy Appeal was launched at Colchester Garrison with a concert from chart-topping pop sensations The Saturdays for families and personnel of 16 Air Assault Brigade, now on combat operations in Afghanistan.

The 2010 Appeal has a fundraising target of £36m, up from the record £35m raised in 2009. "Despite the current economic times, we trust the great British public will show their support for those who have sacrificed on behalf of their country," said the Legion's Director of National Events and Fundraising Russell Thompson. "We call on the nation to give generously and to wear their poppies with pride."

Jump 4 Heroes, The Royal British Legion's Extreme Human Flight Team, provided a spectacular display of wingsuit flight and precision guidance under red and white poppy canopies. Team Captain Major Alastair Macartney said: "As serving soldiers, we know all too

well how important the Poppy Appeal is for the support of today's Armed Forces and we are very proud to be a part of it." Emma-Jayne Webster, the fiancée of a young soldier who was killed in Afghanistan last year, and Gunner Mark Stonelake, a soldier who lost a leg fighting in Afghanistan, also attended the launch. Both feature on this year's Poppy Appeal posters at more than 6,000 locations across the UK and on national television ads. Colchester Garrison is future home to one of four Personnel Recovery Centres that The Royal British Legion will be operating in partnership with the British Army. The Legion will also build, equip and operate the Battle Back Challenge Centre for adventure training and adaptive sports. Both projects will cost the Legion at least £25m, "and we are confident the British public will support this important work enough to provide us the means to provide for our injured heroes," said Mr Russell. With the assistance of British Forces Broadcasting, the Poppy Appeal launch also arranged for video messages from soldiers serving with 16 Air Assault Brigade to be relayed to some 800 family members watching from inside the Cpl Budd VC Gymnasium at Colchester Garrison in Essex.

Essex-born member of The Saturdays, Frankie Sandford said: "It's great to be back in Essex performing for the families living at Colchester Garrison. I really admire and respect our Armed Forces and their families, I think what they do is incredible."

Rochelle Wiseman, another Essex-born member of the group, added: "It's humbling to be asked to help launch this year's Poppy Appeal. We will do anything we can do to support the Poppy Appeal and our brave Armed Forces and their families."

"The Royal British Legion is the leading UK charity providing direct, practical support to the British Armed Forces heroes and their families," said Legion National President, Lieutenant General Sir John Kiszely KCB MC. "The past nine years of conflict have increased the need for our help, both today and for years to come."

The Legion has provided immediate financial help to more than 10,000 Service personnel who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan and their families. "We represent one-third of all the appeals for higher compensation payments for injuries suffered in Afghanistan," Lt Gen Sir John Kiszely added. "And our campaigns have led to increased compensation awards which have placed an extra £12 million in the pockets of the most seriously injured." The Legion currently spends more than a £1.4 million a week or over £200,000 a day in its work helping 160,000 members of the Armed Forces Family each year. Its help is available to all those in the Armed Forces, all who have served in the past, and their dependents.

There are many ways to support The Poppy Appeal either individually or as a company. And now you can show your support digitally - by email, on your mobile and on Facebook.

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Buy official Royal British Legion merchandise online at our new Poppy Shop. Visit www.poppysshop.org.uk now! Buy a poppy online We have lapel poppies, little remembrance crosses, silk poppies etc available online for the cost of a donation plus postage and packaging.

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The Royal British Legion is releasing its own single "Two Minute Silence" on 7 November. Help us to reach No 1 by Remembrance Sunday by ordering your copy now.

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Four couples, three bedrooms one row – and that illicit kiss

REAL-LIFE husband and wife team Juliet Mills and Maxwell Caulfield will star in Peter Hall's critically-acclaimed production of *Bedroom Farce*, one of Alan Ayckbourn's most popular comedies, at Wolverhampton Grand Theatre from Tuesday to Saturday following its recent run in London's West End.

Juliet Mills' prolific career highlights include *Juliet at Heart*, *Oh! What a Lovely War*, *The Elephant Man* and *Billy Wilder's Avant!* for which she was nominated for a Golden Globe for Best Actress.

Her Hollywood husband Maxwell Caulfield is best known for his starring roles in *Dynasty*, *The Colbys* and *Grease 2*. Most recently Caulfield played smooth-talking millionaire Mark Wynde in *Emmerdale*, whose dramatic demise created one of the biggest soap storylines of last year.

The cast also features Bruce Montague, a renowned TV and theatre actor whose credits include playing Leonard in *Carla Lane's* sitcom *Butterflies*; Clare Wilkie, a soap regular who played Sandra Di Marco in *EastEnders*; Oliver Boot, a prolific theatre actor whose TV



Juliet Mills is to star in *Bedroom Farce* at the Grand

THEATRE

credits include *Holby City*, *Two Pints of Lager* and a *Packet of Crisps* and *Hotel Babylon*; Julia Mallam and Ayden Callaghan who are best known for their roles as Dawn Woods and Miles De Souza in *Emmerdale*.

The action focuses on four couples in three bedrooms, with two celebrations, one blazing row and an illicit kiss (or two).

Musical sci-fi spoof *Return To The Forbidden Planet* is presented by Bilston Operatic Company at the Grand until Saturday.

Scaramouche Jones is back by popular demand at Wolverhampton's Arena Theatre, where a sold-out production got standing ovations two years ago. An eloquent blend of drama, comedy and brutality, it follows Jones' globe-trotting odyssey as the son of a prostitute in the West Indies, via Africa and Venice to a concentration camp in Nazi-occupied Poland and then England 1999. It is staged tonight (Thurs).

Canteen

Mig Theatre bring *Kiss Me Like You Mean It*, a poignant and controversial play by Torchwood and Doctor Who writer Chris Chibnall, which is set during a party in a Manchester terraced house, at the Arena tomorrow (Fri). It is described as not suitable for children.

Penny Dreadful present *The Missionary's Position*, a comedy about a 1930s comedian turned clergyman who got too close to the prostitutes he was trying to 'save', on Tuesday.

The Dinner Lady Man, staged by Something And Nothing at the Arena on Wednesday (7), tells of a middle-aged former builder who causes consternation when he joins the all-female staff at a school canteen. Gerald Logan performs Shakespeare's narrative poem *The Rape of Lucrece*, about the impact of the terrible crime on victim and perpetrator, at the Arena on Thursday (18).

Andrew Lloyd Webber and Don Black's 1981 song cycle *Tell Me On A Sunday*,

originally a star vehicle for Marti Webb, has been remodeled for Liverpoolian singer and actress Claire Sweeney. The short show, it lasts just over an hour, is about an English woman searching for love in America. It is staged for one night only at Birmingham's Alexandra Theatre on Tuesday.

It is a week of one-nighters at the Alex including tomorrow (Fri) *Motown on Tour*, a tribute to the legendary soul label; Sunday, Young Gifted & Phat, Blue Mountain's play is a comedy drama set at a Jamaican beauty pageant for the larger lady.

Welsh National Opera present Mozart's *The Magic Flute* at Birmingham Hippodrome tonight (Thurs) and on Saturday. Dominic Cooke's fantastical two hour and 50 minutes production features fabulous beasts. WNO tomorrow (Fri) present a new production of Beethoven's *Fidelio*. Giuseppe Frigeni's powerful prison-set production will be

sung in German with English surtitles.

The Hippodrome will then go dark to prepare for festive treat, Birmingham Royal Ballet's *Cinderella*, which opens on November 24. BRB Director David Bintley's new production of the classic fairy tale, with music by Prokofiev, marks the company's 20th anniversary year based in Birmingham.

Birmingham Stage Company bring Philip Pullman's children's fantasy *The Firework Maker's Daughter* to the stage at Birmingham Old Rep, in Station Street, until November 28. Tinker's Farm Opera stage a new version of *The Merry Widow* at The Crescent Theatre in Birmingham nightly to Saturday.

Two hard-hitting plays are presented at Birmingham Repertory Theatre until Saturday. In the main house *The Big Fellah* tells of a New York fireman who joins the IRA; whilst *The Royal Court's* controversial new play *The Author* is a savage satire on modern theatre.



Tell Me On A Sunday at the Alex stars Liverpoolian singer and actress Claire Sweeney

DIARY DATE

Urban sounds to give The Public a positive vibe

LIVEBOX returns to The Public in West Bromwich on Sunday with a performance by American emcee Why G.

The regular performance arts event, run by Nu Century Arts, embraces live music, poetry, hip hop and dance, offering both emerging and established artists the opportunity to develop and perform their work.

New Yorker Why G (Yogi

Guyadin) produces his own original material with a positive vibe. Nu Century Arts host a number of successful events across the West Midlands, providing a platform for established and emerging artists from the African Caribbean community to become involved in the creative industry.

Linda Saunders, Managing Director of The Public said: "We're delighted that Nu Century Arts will be bringing their successful

LiveBox event to The Public for a third time. Urban music is a hugely popular genre in Sandwell so we expect the night to be a great success."

Doors open at 7pm and the show begins 7.30pm. Tickets are £5, available from The Public box office on (0121) 533 7161. For more information about all events at The Public visit the website at www.thepublic.com or call the box office.



American emcee Why G (Yogi Guyadin)

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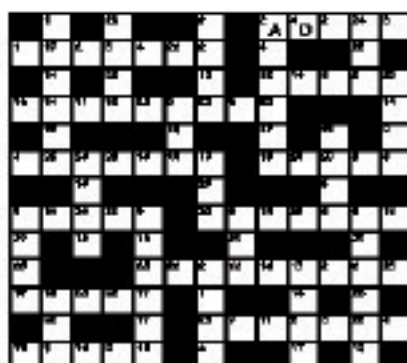
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Brain Gym

No. 090

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letters to solve the grid to complete it.



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Cryptic Clues:

Across

1. The first of the letters of the alphabet (10)
2. Made a record (10)
3. A small, round, round object (10)
4. A small, round, round object (10)
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Sudoku

Fill in the grid below so that every column, every row and each of the three boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.



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Circlegram

Replace the question mark with a letter so that the letters in each circle can be read in any order. Use the letters in the words, and the letter represented by the number in the circle.



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Jarrod (Eric Balfour) and Elaine (Scottie Thompson) make a run for it

Fight for survival in alien onslaught

CINEMA

AFTER a late night party, a group of friends in Los Angeles are awakened in the dead of the night by an eerie light beaming through the window.

Like moths to a flame, the light source is drawing people outside before they suddenly vanish into thin air. That's the set up for apocalyptic new science fiction thriller Skyline, which opens at cinemas tomorrow (Fri), a special effects bonanza blending elements of Cloverfield, The Mist, War of the Worlds, Independence Day and Close Encounters.

The friends soon find themselves in a fight for survival as the world unravels around them in a terrifying alien onslaught.

Eric Balfour (from 24) stars alongside David Zayas (Dexter), with Donald Faison (Scrubs), Brittany Daniel (Sweet Valley High) and Neil Hopkins (Lost). Skyline is directed by brothers Colin Strause and Greg Strause, written by Liam O'Donnell and Joshua Cordes.



In the film strange lights descend on the city of Los Angeles

DISNEY SPECIAL

Still magic after all these years

Disney On Ice 100 Years of Magic, NIA

It is 108 years since Walt Disney was born and next week it will be 72 years since Mickey Mouse made his movie debut... so I can only assume that the 100 Years of Magic is part of a decade-long celebration of the studio's movie magic. Whatever the theme, the latest Disney ice spectacular does live up to the hype - it is a visual treat full of colourful costumed characters and featuring thrilling skating.

Mickey and Minnie Mouse, with some help from the accident-prone Goofy, introduce a cavalcade of favourite Disney songs and moments. It begins in eye-catching style with the Genie from Aladdin duplicating himself into a fast skating chorus line of 20 blue genies. Then a Finding Nemo segment brings back some of the surreal fish costumes, including a menacingly toothy Bruce the Shark, that delighted Disney ice show regulars last year.

The castle set came into its own for a Beauty and the Beast excerpt which became a tribute to the Disney princesses as Belle and her Prince were joined on the ice by Cinderella and Prince Charming, Princess Jasmine and Aladdin, Ariel and Prince Eric, Pocahontas and John Smith, and finally Snow White and her Prince for a series of superbly danced duets.

A big cheer greeted the arrival of Woody, Jessie and Buzz Lightyear, joined by the toy soldiers of Toy Story before the first half ended in dazzling style with a tribute to a favourite Disney theme parks institution It's A Small World.

The anarchic Stitch sadly made an all-too-brief appearance after the interval but then the audience were treated to a tribute to old school classic Pinocchio, probably the most magical portion of the show when Jiminy Cricket croons When You Wish Upon A Star as the fairy descends from her star to turn the puppet into an 'almost real' boy. After being led astray Pinocchio made amends by rescuing his father from the belly of the giant whale Monstro.

The whale was good but the dragon was better in the fast-paced potted version of Mulan, in which snow fell onto the rink as Mulan's Chinese troops battled the Huns. The Incredibles showed their super powers before the most popular part of the show, The Lion King with Hakuna Matata and the gorgeously costumed Simba and Nala dancing to Can You Feel The Love Tonight?

You could certainly feel the love for the whole Disney experience as the huge cast returned for a big firework finale. Disney On Ice continues to celebrate the magic at the NIA to Sunday, November 14.

LEON BURAKOWSKI



Mickey and Minnie Mouse introduced a cavalcade of favourite Disney moments

CD REVIEWS

Seasons Of My Soul: Rumer

What a very special voice. Rumer (seen right) has been compared to Karen Carpenter and Laura Nyro and her soft, yet sturdy, tones deserve to be mentioned in such legendary company.

Slow, the third and finest song on this debut album, is the perfect showcase. It is gorgeous and will be a huge hit. This is a warm album that feels as though it has been written from experience rather than by committee. It is an engaging set of songs from the 31-year-old singer/songwriter (real name Sarah Joyce, her stage name is a tribute to children's author Rumer Godden).

Whilst none quite match the wonderful Slow, which featured on an EP which introduced this singer who comes from Pakistan by way of the New Forest, they deserve time to work their way under the skin - particularly the laid-back dreamy Come To Me High, the spine-tingling On My Way Home and the Norah Jones-ish Aretha.

Rumer is to appear in concert at Birmingham's Glee Club on December 13. Given the release of this album, her appearances with Jools Holland and on Elton John's Electric Prom... it's likely to be the hottest ticket in town this festive season.



by Leon Burakowski

The Wanted: The Wanted

Watch out JLS this five-piece (Jay, Nathan, Tom, Siva and Max) are impressive new kids on the block. The Wanted's debut album opens with a cracking pop song, All Time Low, which bounces off the album and into your brain, where it will stay.

Heart Vacancy is more of a standard ballad with its harmonies and boys together chorus and High and Low is almost choral. However, it remains apparent that these lads are a million miles away from the 'stand-up-for-the-key-change' school of dewy-eyed balladry.

The Wanted live up to their promise to bring sexy back to boy bandism with come on song Let's Get Ugly which cheekily uses the famous refrain from Ennio Morricone's western movie theme The Good The Bad and The Ugly. Say It On The Radio is a rocker whilst Golden is an interestingly strange almost-indie rock song.

The emphasis is back on the dancefloor for Weakness before the double salvo of potential hits, Behind Bars and Made. A lot of people are going to want The Wanted.

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New Korando crossover to spearhead return of Far East firm to UK market in 2011

SsangYong New Year launch plan

FAR East manufacturer SsangYong will return to the UK market in the New Year with a new crossover* featuring a new platform, new engine, and new design courtesy of Giorgetto Giugiaro.

The Korando will offer two-wheel or all-wheel drive with a new 2.0 litre diesel engine offering a blend of good fuel economy and high performance.

Introducing a number of firsts for SsangYong, the Korando is ready to take a bold step into one of the most buoyant sectors of the European car market.

Merging the low running costs and dynamic abilities of a conventional family hatchback with the visual appeal, adventurous spirit and rough-road capability of an SUV, the Korando is aimed at the heart of the crossover market.

The Korando brand is one of the strongest in the SUV market and is listed as the oldest in Korea.

Now, after a five-year absence, Korando is back in an all-new form to claim its place among the world's new compact SUV crossover models.

An all-new model deserves an all-new powertrain – and the Korando's new e-XDi200 engine is at the very heart of the crossover's appeal. With a high power output of 175PS, superb combined cycle fuel economy of 47mpg and CO₂ emissions of only 157g/km, the Korando can challenge the very best rivals. Refinement is a key

strength of the new 2.0-litre diesel engine which is offered with both manual and automatic six-speed transmissions to power both front and four-wheel drive Korando models. Furthermore, the Korando range will be extended next year with the introduction of a more frugal diesel engine as well as a high-value petrol unit.

To suit the needs, expectations and budget of all types of crossover driver the Korando is offered in both front-wheel-drive and all-wheel-drive (AWD) forms.

Feeding power

While variants feeding power only to the front wheels will offer the lowest price entry into Korando ownership, SsangYong's advanced AWD system makes the most of the model's dynamic abilities both on and off road.

The Korando's AWD is an 'on-demand' system. By monitoring the grip level, the technology can determine the driving conditions and traction available before distributing power to the wheels that need it most. Under normal driving conditions 100 per cent of the engine's torque is driving the front wheels so that the Korando can run with the efficiency of a family hatchback.

However, as soon as the front tyres begin to lose traction, power is fed to the rear wheels to ensure safe, stable and dependable progress is resumed. The technology also comes into play

when pulling away on a steep slope, allowing the Korando to drive off from a standstill smoothly and safely every time.

What's more, the AWD even has a special in-built self-protecting function. If a driver fits a different type of tyre or has extreme differences in wear between front and rear tyres, the driving power going to the rear is reduced to prevent any damage to the transmission.

Calling on its 4x4 know-how, SsangYong hasn't forgotten that many Korandos will find their way off the beaten track on a wintry adventure or towing a caravan on a sodden campsite. That's why engineers have fitted an AWD lock mode to manually force the spread of power between the front and rear wheels at speeds below 25mph.

Pull

All this only adds to the Korando's credentials as a class leading towing vehicle. The SsangYong has been engineered to pull a braked trailer weighing as much as 2,000 kg, while an unbraked trailer of 750kg also poses no problems.

With or without a trailer, at the core of the AWD Korando's engineering is safety. When working with ESP (Electronic Stability Program) and ABS (Anti-lock Braking System), the four-wheel-drive system provides the best possible grip and control whatever the conditions.

Making the most of its commanding driving position, the Korando aims to offer superb cabin comfort and interior ergonomics.

The Korando has a cabin which uses subtle design detailing to punctuate a spacious and practical interior capable of meeting the needs of the most demanding crossover buyer.

The first models will be delivered to UK buyers in January. Prices will be confirmed later.



The Korando sets out to merge the visual appeal and rough road capability of an SUV with the low running costs of a family hatch

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DY10XTB	Lancer 4 Dr	LANCER 1.8 GS3	ORIENT RED	2500	£12,997	£12,495	£502	MF56JYJ	207	1.4 SE 87 5 DOO	Blue	13156	£6,699	£5,995	£704
DY10YYX	ASX	1.8 3 DIESEL 2WD	Kingfisher Blue	4500	£20,364	£15,995	£4,369	BD08SNF	Agila	AGILA DESIGN AUTO	Red	14004	£7,495	£6,995	£500
DP10XGX	Shogun	3.2 DI-D LWB ELEGANCE AUTO	ORIENT RED	8000	SOLD			BP07CEO	207	1.4 SPORT 87 3DOOR	Orange	17477	£6,995	£5,995	£1,000
DP10XGV	ASX	1.8 3 DIESEL 2WD	COOL SILVER	2500	SOLD			FE59VVC	Ibiza	S A/C 1.2 3 DOOR	Red	9000	£8,995	£7,995	£1,000
WX10JVK	Lancer 4 Dr	LANCER EVO X GSR SST 330	Blue	2500	SOLD			EG05LJV	Getz	1.6 SPORT 3 DOOR	Blue	23207	£4,294	£3,495	£799
DV60VOB	Outlander	2.2 DI-D GX4 MANUAL	STONE GREY	1000	£29,069	£25,995	£3,074	WJ05TMX	Forester	2.5 XT ESTATE	GREY	74000	£6,495	£6,295	£200
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BK07LJO	Colt 3 Dr	1.1 CZI MANUAL	Spicy Red	50211	SOLD	SOLD		LN07XZR	CLK	200K SPORT 1.8 CONVERTIBLE	Silver	32418	£18,995	£17,995	£1,000
DY10XTA	Lancer 5 Dr	LANCER 1.8 GS2 SP	COOL SILVER	2000	£12475	£11,995	£480	NV56JXN	Tigra	1.8 SPORT TWINPORT CONVERTIBLE	Blue	30576	£7,995	£6,995	£1,000
DY10SYJ	Colt 3 Dr	1.3 C22	Spicy Red	DEL MLS	£8,995	£8,495	£500	YP57MRV	Leon	1.9 STYLANCE TD	Red	14216	£9,995	£9,495	£500
DY10SYO	Colt 3 Dr	1.3 C22	Spicy Red	DEL MLS	£8,995	£8,495	£500	BG55CHL	S-Type	2.7 SPORT DIESEL	GREEN	30000	£12,995	£11,995	£1,000
CU08LTA	Outlander	2.0 DI-D WARRIOR	COOL SILVER	9172	£18,995	£17,495	£1,500	VX58UEG	Note	1.4 VISIA 5 DOOR	Silver	10137	£6,899	£6,495	£404
DY10YYL	L200	WARRIOR DBLCAB AUTOMATIC	STARLIGHT SILVER	2500	£27,724	£21,995	£5729	BN59XRF	Civic	1.4 SE 5 DOOR	Silver	7000	£11,795	£11,295	£500
VU09XNJ	Lancer 5 Dr	1.5 GS2 MANUAL	Black	11103	£10,495	£9,995	£500	BV58WNG	3 TAKARA	3 TAKARA 1.6	BLACK	25000	£8,495	£7,495	£1,000
FE07UMJ	Shogun	2.5 DIESEL SE SPORT	SILVER	29405	£11,795	£10,495	£1,300	BG57GNU	Qashgai	1.6 5 DOOR	Silver	19000	£11,295	£10,995	£300
WJ56JVL	L200	DI-D WARRIOR DBL CAB	STARLIGHT SILVER	19871	£11,995 + VAT	£11,495 + VAT	£500	T321PEN	C4	1.8 PICASSO 5 V	SILVER	27200	£7,995	£7,495	£500
BK08GXV	L200	2.5 DI-D 4WD WARRIOR DBL CAB	GREY	36602	SOLD	SOLD		DU53UJX	Charade	1.0SL AUTO 5DR	RED	32000	£2,995	£2,695	£300
VK57YYJ	Lancer 4 Dr	1.6 ELEGANCE 4DOOR	AMETHYST BLACK	28264	£5,795	£4,995	£800	DU050WW	Carens	2.0LE CRDI AUTO	Blue	29000	SOLD	SOLD	
BD07LFE	L200	DI-D ANIMAL AUTO DBL CAB	COSMOS BLACK	42083	£11400 + VAT	£11,295 + VAT	£105	V052BZU	M3	3.2 CONVERTIBLE	Silver	42893	SOLD	SOLD	
BN57HWY	L200	2.5 TO WARRIOR DBL CAB	STARLIGHT SILVER	26000	£11999 + VAT	£11,795 + VAT	£204								
FL59HNK	L200	DI-D TROJAN DBL CAB	BLACK	12000	£13950 + VAT	£13,750 + VAT	£200								
DY60TZA	Lancer 5 Dr	2.0 DI-D GS 2	GREY	DEL MLS	£17,399	£13,995	£3,404								
DY60TYZ	Lancer 5 Dr	2.0 DI-D GS 2	Red	DEL MLSE	17,399	£13,995	£3,404								



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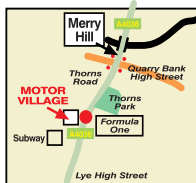
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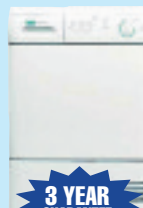


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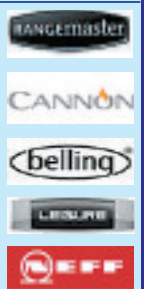


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sport

Come and join us ... Ryan Shore, aged 13, and Cristina Vernava, 10, are hoping more young players will become members of Lye Badminton Club



Badminton plea for juniors

A BADMINTON group is appealing for more junior players following a move to their new Hagley home.

Lye Badminton Club has around 30 members from across the Dudley borough and the group is looking to boost its numbers further.

They are regularly visited by professional coaches and three young players have already been selected to play for Worcester County squads this year.

Club secretary Liz Hamar said: "It's great to give young people the opportunity to progress to the 20 local adult

teams that play in the Cradley and District Badminton League. I have been playing badminton for 40 years and am still absolutely addicted!"

Lye Badminton Juniors meet every Thursday from 6pm to 8pm at Hagley Roman Catholic School, Brake Lane.

Pay as you play sessions for eight to 16-year-olds cost £2.50 and rackets are provided, while players are asked to wear trainers and bring their own refreshments.

Call Liz Hamar on 01384 377691 for more details.

Old boys run riot to kill off Robins

Tara has world at her feet with kickboxing title

CHARLESWORTH Martial Arts are on top of the world after 17-year-old Tara Billingham won the World Kickboxing Associations Title.

Tara, of Holly Hall, Dudley, travelled to Scotland for the competition and faced plenty of tough opponents from around the globe.

She saw off a Canadian, an Italian and two German fighters to be crowned world champion, while also finding time to represent England in the cadet girls side which also won the team crown.

Jason Charlesworth, chief instructor at Charlesworth Martial Arts, in Old Hill, paid tribute to his star pupil.

"Tara is having an amazing year and has won nearly every competition she has entered," he said.

"She has now topped off the year by adding yet another individual and team world title to her every growing list of achievements."

Tara trains nearly every night at our school so I'm not surprised at her success."

Team CMA Villains are jetting off to Germany to represent England at the end of November, with the German Open being one of the biggest European tournaments for all martial arts disciplines.

Jason also runs a full time boxing gym where Danny the DOG Yates stopped his opponent in the second round with a technical knockout at a show in Oldbury recently.

Danny represents Pride Boxing this Saturday against a tough opponent from Wales.

Anyone interested in martial arts or boxing can contact Jason on 07889 627929.



Tara Billingham with her World Kickboxing Associations medal

GORNAL ATHLETIC 5 DUDLEY TOWN 1
FORMER manager Ian Rowe masterminded a crushing defeat of Dudley Town as Gornal Athletic triumphed in a one-sided derby.

A startling eight ex-Dudley players featured in the Gornal line-up, with another two on the bench, as the home side got one over their former employers in style.

Dudley boss Steve Hinks drafted in former Walsall and Manchester United goalkeeper Tom Cox between the sticks in place of ankle injury victim Darren Walters, while there were also starts for Matt Martin, Chris Knight and Dan Miller.

With Gornal rampant from the off at the Garden Walk Stadium, it only took four minutes to forge ahead with a Craig Ball penalty, following a Miller foul on Callum Martin.

The hosts extended their lead 20 minutes later though Marvin Nisbett, who was on the end of midfielder Kristian Green's right-wing cross for the easiest of headed finishes.

Dudley clawed themselves more into the game as the half drew on but were unable to take advantage of two rare errors from Gornal shot-stopper James Pemberton.

The first saw Matt Martin head a spilled corner wide, before Alex Perry could only place the ball back to Pemberton after the keeper's weak clearance.

On 38 minutes Gornal went

three goals ahead, but in controversial circumstances.

Miller was again the culprit as this time David Meese was brought down in the area, although it looked like the former Atherstone man had played the ball. Up stepped Ball, who claimed his second from 12 yards to give Gornal a comfortable half-time lead.

The introduction of new signings James Darby and Andy Roberts breathed life into Dudley Town after the break and they clawed themselves back into the game when Matt Martin broke clear of the Gornal defence to slide a shot past Pemberton.

Sadly for The Robins, the game was put beyond doubt on 73 minutes when a firm shot from Callum Martin was well blocked by Cox, with Meese on hand to put the ball into the empty net.

Several

From then on came wave after wave of attacks from the home side as they sensed a rout.

Cox heroically soldiered on, making several fine saves to deny Meese and substitute Cameron Morgan, before the latter added a fifth with five minutes left on the clock.

There was still time for the beset Town keeper to pull off yet another breathtaking save, taking the ball from the feet of Cameron Morgan when the striker was through on goal.

Dudley face another derby when Tony Gore brings his Dudley Sports side to The Dell this Saturday (13).



Stourbridge front row forward Jordan Page makes progress at Otley during his team's third successive victory in National League One

Matt'll do nicely as Stour make it three

TWO second-half tries were enough to see Stourbridge over the line in a scrappy, stop-start encounter at Otley, coming away with a 16-21 victory that makes it three in a row in National League One.

In the end scores from Matt Williams and Will Davis were enough to see Stourbridge home, but they were made to work hard until the final whistle by a game Otley outfit.

The home side did not look like as if they had only won twice this season when centre James White took the first phase of the game 50 yards through a huge gap in the Saxons midfield before offloading to James Twomey, who went over unopposed.

Stourbridge have made a habit of such early setbacks, so their heads do not drop when they suffer them. Instead they battle back, with the back row unit of James Rodley, Rupert Cooper and James Freeman to the fore.

Rodley went closest to a first-half try for Stourbridge, knocking on as he stretched for the line, while the Alis-tair Bressington's runaround seemed

to have put Matt Williams in, but he was denied when the touch judge spotted a forward pass in the move.

In the end the visitors had to settle for three Ali Bressington penalties, which gave them a 9-5 lead at the interval.

Three minutes later and Rodley raced through to pick up the loose ball from a kick ahead got the ball away with a lovely pass over his shoulder for Williams to score.

The pressure on Stourbridge went further ahead when they were rewarded for turning down a kickable penalty. They won the resulting lineout and drove forward for a try on the left.

The home side finished the stronger of the two sides and hit back when they too opted for a lineout and drove over their skipper Jamie Sutton for a score.

The pressure on Stourbridge was ramped up a notch and replacement Jordan Page was yellow carded for his team's persistent offending around the breakdown. Otley had to settle for a late Christian Georgiou penalty and a losing bonus point.

So near yet so far as battling Kings toppled in eight-goal thriller

WHITCHURCH 5 KINGSWINFORD 3

KINGSWINFORD started this vital match nervously and found themselves 2-0 down within five minutes. They pulled a goal back when Abrar Baig raced into the D and fired in a reverse stick shot.

The second half saw Kingswinford pile on the pressure and veteran Richard Turner, put clean through by Surjit Takhar, had his low right-hand shot well saved by the Whitchurch keeper. Baig was then harshly yellow carded for a late tackle that was more to do with him losing his footing than anything nasty.

Takhar spun off his marker and fired a shot against the post as Kingswinford threatened further, but Whitchurch soaked up the pressure and through their impressive forward claimed a goal on the counter attack.

At 3-1 Kingswinford were given a lifeline when Takhar raced past two challenges and was hacked down by the last man, winning a penalty, which Chris Brown converted.

Kingswinford failed to take advantage of their dominance when Ash Baig blasted his

shot straight at the keeper and Dave Williams could not force the ball over the goal line.

They were then reduced to 10 men again when Takhar was given a harsh yellow for using his body in a 50-50 tackle and Whitchurch scored from a short corner to make it 4-2.

With a big final push, Kingswinford scored via a short Brown corner, which was forced home by Abrar, and the score stood tantalisingly at 4-3. The final five minutes saw Whitchurch cement victory after a rare error of judgement from Kingswinford stopper Wasim Iqbal.

Kingswinford's Sonny Matharu said: "I am amazed Whitchurch are in this position given their performance today. We tried hard and I cannot fault the guys."

KINGSWINFORD 15 WHITCHURCH 0

Two draws in two games from a much improved Kingswinford seconds side had marked a promising start to the season. They faced bottom of the table Whitchurch expecting big things and were not to be disappointed.

HOCKEY

Daman Johal opened the scoring with a well taken finish from close range and this opened the floodgates for what can only be described as a rout. Ed Parkes was effective down the right of the pitch, with captain Adam Pritchard just as invaluable in the centre.

Goals came freely, though two excellent strikes in particular stood out – one from Sam George, who skinned two defenders and slammed the ball into the bottom corner, before Daman Johal brilliantly powered in from the top of the D.

Guneet Uppal's drag flicks were deadly from short corners and Cole Hickman was always alert to any opportunity, clinically finishing three times for his hat-trick. Johal and Uppal, who scored four goals each, are now climbing up the top scorers table.

Kingswinford's defence was rarely tested, though veteran Parj Sangha and James Rawlings cut out any chances Whitchurch had, leaving keeper Tom Hickman with little to do.

All in all it was an excellent performance and, in truth, the margin of victory could have been greater still, judging by the amount of chances the home team failed to convert.

KINGSWINFORD 11 PERSHORE 0

After watching the seconds thrash Whitchurch, Kingswinford thirds repeated the feat against Pershore with another crushing victory. The game started slowly and the home side's intentions were clear in that they were going to press with attacking hockey. The pressure paid off with a number of short corners and the goals started to flow, with hat-tricks from Tom Reed and Ranjit Bhadal.

WEDNESBURY 2 KINGSWINFORD 1

The Badgers all played well against a much older Wednesday side, narrowly going down 2-1. It was an even match with lots of attacks and a fair few chances for both teams. The Badgers fought back to claim an equaliser after Wednesday opened the scoring but Wednesday snatched the win with a lucky deflection from a short corner, with the whistle going after the corner was given.

No joy despite pressure

DUDLEY LADIES 0 WEM LADIES 0

DUDLEY started the game with a high attacking tempo and it was not long before they were aiming numerous shots at the Wem keeper. The hosts forced a succession of short corners but were struggling to capitalise on the opportunities they created. In the second half Dudley applied constant pressure to the Wem defence but, despite numerous attempts on goal and further short corners, they had to make do with a goalless draw.

DUDLEY LADIES 0 WEST BROMWICH LADIES 7

The seconds were soundly beaten at home to West Bromwich, despite defending admirably from the start.

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